

Medicaid & Exchange Advisory Committee (Board)
Meeting Minutes
June 22, 2020

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Committee Members Present

Jessa Barnard
Lisa Draper
Devon Green
Mike Fisher
Gladys Konstantin
Sharon Henault
Rebecca Heintz
Helen Labun
Erin Maguire
Kirstin Murphy
Julie Tessler
Jason Williams

DVHA Staff Present

Cory Gustafson
Addie Strumolo
Nissa James
Zack Goss
Alicia Cooper
Sandi Hoffman

Other Interested Parties

Jamie Rainville
Kelly Barnier
Alexandra Sosnowski
Lucie Garand
Betty Morse
Daisy Berbeco

*This meeting was held by conference call only.

Documents

- Advisory Committee 6_22_20 Agenda.pdf
- Advisory Committee PPT 6_22_2020.pdf

*All are posted to the [Vermont Health Connect website](#)

Convene

Devon Green and Erin Maguire chaired the meeting

Roll Call, Quorum, Meeting Schedule

Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager

- Meeting will be held on August 24, 2020 to meet the 10-meeting statutory requirement and provide an opportunity for consumers and providers to hear updates from DVHA and provide feedback per request.

Agenda Preview

Devon Green and Erin Maguire, Co-Chairs

- Upcoming meeting agendas will be determined following this meeting with a focus on the consumer perspective.

Approval of Minutes

May 2020 meeting minutes were approved.

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COVID-19 Coverage and Provider Update

Alicia Cooper, Director of Payment Reform, Reimbursement, and Rate Setting (DVHA)
Addie Strumolo, Deputy Commissioner (DVHA)

Focus on ensuring health care system financial stability (i.e. that provider network continues to be operational while cash flow is uncertain).

- Priority: Preserve access to health care services for Medicaid members during and after the Emergency period
- The [Agency of Human Services has spent almost 50 million dollars towards provider financial relief](#)¹
 1. April Retainer program – Immediate Financial Relief, Phase I
 - a. April 2020: Application-based process to support provider entities in a difficult financial situation (reduced FFS and utilization)
 - i. Variety of provider organization types applied
 - ii. ~4.3 million dollars were issued as payments
 2. Sustained Monthly payment Retainer program – May/June, Phase II
 - a. May and June: Continue provider cash flow for Medicaid lost revenue
 - i. Monthly payment initiative to reduce provider burden
 - ii. Make payments more timely
 - iii. ~13 million dollars were issued as payments
 - b. July Payments will continue totaling about ~5.6 million dollars for the month
 3. Targeted payments amounting to approximately ~8 million dollars to hospitals experiencing particular financial difficulty
 4. DMH and DAIL efforts amounting to approximately ~10 million dollars specific to Designated Agencies and Specialized Service Agencies
 5. DCF efforts through Children’s Integrated Services and Private Non-Medical Institutions to access additional financial relief during State of Emergency
 6. Nursing home financial relief allowing an expedited review of financial request during COVID-19 emergency

AHS is continuing to coordinate closely with the Administration, Vermont Legislature, and Provider Associations on a health care and human service provider stabilization program that could be implemented as a grant program with coronavirus relief funds distributed to eligible providers based upon need identified through an application-based process.²

¹ <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/WorkGroups/Senate%20Health%20and%20Welfare/COVID-19/W~Mike%20Smith~COVID-19%20Health%20Care%20Provider%20Stabilization%20Proposal~6-4-2020.pdf>

² <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/Docs/BILLS/H-0965/H-0965%20As%20passed%20by%20the%20House%20Official.pdf>

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Funding for testing and treatment of uninsured population in VT:

- The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) implemented the COVID-19 Uninsured Program to reimburse health care providers for testing and treatment for the uninsured.³ DVHA will be working with partners to monitor this federal program for provider reimbursement; if the funding for the federal Program runs out during the period of the federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) DVHA is prepared to provide other options to support provider reimbursement for testing and testing-related services for the uninsured.

Eligibility and Enrollment:

Programmatic changes and flexibilities are still in place to prioritize and facilitate initial and continuous access to health care coverage. During Emergency period:

- 7,300 new Medicaid households
- 1,100 new QHP households (1/2 came through COVID-19 SEP)
- COVID-19 SEP has been extended to August 14th.

COVID-19 and Health Disparities in Vermont

Devon Green and Erin Maguire, Co-Chairs

Discussion included but not limited to:

- Data needed on individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities;
- Focus on providers & provider education;
- Focus on health care system and required adaptations to respond to the Emergency effectively;
- Committee staying within the scope of DVHA as it considers actions that support addressing health disparities;
- Topic intersects providers and non-providers;
- More training needed: what are ways to deliver and require the training for health care providers and practices (to include additional staff in the practice);
- Improved access to information and communication for non-English as a first language Vermonters;
- Focus on LGBTQIA+ populations.

³ <https://www.hrsa.gov/CovidUninsuredClaim>

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Commissioner Report

- Medicaid claims numbers have bounced back. Weekly increases in claims have been observed as of late; however, not all claim types are necessarily the same as before (e.g., increase in telehealth claims, and specifically, health care service delivery through telemedicine).
 - March 2020 ~110,000 claims
 - May 2020 ~65,000 claims
 - Week of June 15, 2020 ~114,000 claims
- Closeout to FY20 on June 30, 2020. Decrease in claims during initial period of Emergency means DVHA is no longer currently overspent.
- Several contracts at renewal point, specifically contract with Maximus: Customer Support Center.
- In the month of July, Vermont Health Connect will experience a system cutover where the system will experience approximately one week of downtime.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM.

Next Meetings
July 27, 2020
August 24, 2020

Time: 10:00AM – 11:30AM

Site: Meetings will be convened through Skype due to the State of Emergency produced by COVID-19 until further notice.

Please visit the Advisory Committee website for up-to-date information:
http://info.healthconnect.vermont.gov/advisory_board/meeting_materials

Additional Information:
<https://dvha.vermont.gov/covid-19>